



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Rick Scott
Governor

Rebecca Kapusta
Interim Secretary

September 28, 2018

Walter Sachs
Regional Managing Director
Northwest Region

CERTIFIED MAIL/RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dawndrell Martin and Mary Highsmith
[REDACTED]

Re: Foster Home License Revocation

Dear Ms. Martin and Ms. Highsmith:

This letter is to notify you that the Department of Children and Families has reviewed your licensing file and has made a determination to revoke your foster home license for the reasons stated herein.

Your home was licensed as a foster home through Life Management Center on November 16, 2017. In July of 2018, the Department of Children and Families received allegations of abuse and conducted a child institutional investigation regarding your home, specifically case number 2018-612266.

[REDACTED] Ms. Dawndrell Martin was identified as the Caregiver Responsible.

Since that time, the Department is aware that criminal charges have been brought against Ms. Martin.

The findings made by both the Department of Children and Families and the Child Protection Team are very concerning. As licensed foster parents and as a condition of your license, you both reviewed and signed the Partnership Plan Agreement on October 26, 2017. Specifically, per the Agreement, you agreed to provide the following:

4. Excellent parenting is a reasonable expectation of caregivers. Caregivers will provide and DCF, CBC, and agency staff will support excellent parenting. This requires a loving commitment to the child and the child's safety and well-being, appropriate supervision and positive methods of discipline, encouragement of the child's strengths, respect for the child's individuality and likes and dislikes, providing opportunities to develop the child's interests and skills, awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior, equal participation of the child in family life, involvement of the child with the community and a commitment to enable the child to lead a normal life.

The Department has determined that you have breached the Partnership Plan Agreement and have directly threatened the safety of the children that were in your care. As such, the Department can no longer assure the safety of children in your care and intends to revoke your

license. The Department has determined that this decision is appropriate based on Florida Statutes and the following rules from Florida Administrative Code:

F.A.C. 65C-13.030 Standards for Licensed Out-of-Home Caregivers

(3) Discipline.

(a) Licensed out-of-home caregivers shall discipline children with kindness, consistency, and understanding, and with the purpose of helping the child develop responsibility and self-control.

(b) Licensed out-of-home caregivers shall use positive methods of discipline. Acceptable methods of discipline include: reinforcing acceptable behavior, expressing verbal disappointment of the child's behavior, loss of privileges, grounding, restricting the child to the house or yard, sending the child out of the room and away from the family activity, and redirecting the child's activity.

(c) Licensed out-of-home caregivers shall not subject children to cruel, severe, or unusual forms of discipline.

(d) Licensed out-of-home caregivers shall not use corporal punishments of any kind.

A Corrective Action Plan would not be an appropriate or effective method to correct the deficiencies that compromise the safety and well-being of a child placed in your home.

IF YOU BELIEVE THIS DECISION IS IN ERROR, YOU MAY REQUEST AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ENCLOSED "NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER CHAPTER 120, FLORIDA STATUTES"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Regina Pleas", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Regina Pleas
Family and Community Services Program Manager
Northwest Region

Enclosure: Notification of Rights Under Chapter 120, Florida Statutes



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER CHAPTER 120, FLORIDA STATUTES

IF YOU BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT'S DECISION IS IN ERROR, YOU MAY REQUEST AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING UNDER SECTIONS 120.569 AND 120.57, FLORIDA STATUTES, TO CONTEST THE DECISION. YOUR REQUEST FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT BY 5:00 P.M., NO LATER THAN 21 CALENDAR DAYS AFTER YOU RECEIVED NOTICE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S DECISION.

You must submit your request for an administrative hearing to the Department at the following addresses:

Assistant Regional Counsel
Florida Department of Children and Families
2383 Phillips Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32308

IF YOUR REQUEST FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING IS NOT RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT BY THE ABOVE DEADLINE, YOU WILL HAVE WAIVED YOUR RIGHTS TO A HEARING AND THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED ACTION WILL BE FINAL.

If you disagree with the facts stated in the Department's decision, you may request a formal administrative hearing under section 120.57(1), Florida Statutes. At a formal hearing, you may present evidence and arguments on all issues involved, and question the witnesses called by the Department.

If you do not disagree with the facts stated in the notice, you may request an informal administrative hearing under section 120.57(2), Florida Statutes. At an informal hearing, you may present your argument or a written statement for consideration by the Department.

Your request for an administrative hearing must meet the requirements of rule 28-106.201(2) or rule 28-106.301(2), Florida Administrative Code, depending on whether you request a formal hearing or an informal hearing. In either event, your request for an administrative hearing must:

1. Include a copy of the decision received from the Department;

Northwest Region
2383 Phillips Road Tallahassee, FL 32308

Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

2. Be prepared legibly on 8½ by 11 inch white paper, and
3. Include all of the following items:
 - (a) The Department's file or identification number, if known;
 - (b) Your name, address, email address (if any) and telephone number and the name, address, email address (if any) and telephone number of your representative, if any;
 - (c) An explanation of how your rights or interests will be affected by the action described in the notice of the Department's decision;
 - (d) A statement of when and how you received notice of the Department's decision;
 - (e) A statement of all facts in the notice of the Department's decision with which you disagree. If you do not disagree with any of the facts stated in the notice, you must say so;
 - (f) A statement of the facts you believe justify a change in the Department's decision;
 - (g) A statement of the specific rules or statutes you believe require reversal or modification of the Department's proposed action;
 - (h) A statement explaining how the facts you have alleged above relate to the specific rules or statutes you have identified above; and
 - (i) A statement of the relief you want, including precisely the action you want the Department to take.

Section 120.569, Florida Statutes, and rule 28-106.201(3), Florida Administrative Code, require the Department to dismiss your request for hearing if it is not in substantial compliance with the requirements above.

Mediation as described in section 120.573, Florida Statutes, is not available. However, other forms of mediation or informal dispute resolution may be available after a timely request for an administrative hearing has been received, if agreed to by all parties, and on such terms as agreed to by all parties. The right to an administrative proceeding is not affected when mediation or informal dispute resolution does not result in a settlement.